



KILIAN JÖRG 2017-07-27

ECOLOGICAL ART AND THE RESILIENCE OF MODERNISM

NONMUSIC DARK ECOLOGY, ECOLOGICAL ART, FETISHISM, NON-MUSIC

"Ecological Art is a worldwide art movement, the philosophy of which is based on ecological awareness, the harmonic coexistence of human beings and nature. It is a revitalizing movement in terms of materials used in works of art, which are in many cases, recycled and natural at the same time. Most of them emphasize the beauty of nature as a masterpiece, but one which is as fragile and vulnerable as our own life."¹

This definition of ecological art by Nohra Corredor, found at random via Google search, seems to me to portray a classical understanding of ecological art as some rather fuzzy attempts on such big romantic words as "harmony", "beauty" "nature as a masterpiece" and finding reconciliation or revitalization within the ecosystem.

In this short essay I am proposing to broaden this term for it to encompass more than romantic images of beautiful landscapes, colorful assemblages of fruits and other objects found in 'nature' aligned to more or less 'ancient', 'spiritual' symbols like the spiral or the flower of life. Based on the insight that 'nature' – in itself a problematic term² – is not only harmonic, but can as much be destructive³ and is far from "in balance"⁴, I would like to propose regarding some artworks as 'ecological art' which most people would not commonly associate with. In a time that is marked by what I want to call the *resilience of modernism* and *machine fetishism*, playing with the dirt and noise of industrial machines as well as experimentally embracing the lure of capitalist exploitation⁵ might turn out to be more *ecological* than producing easily marketable images of a "better world" in which all of us live in a simulation of peaceful co-existence with each other (human and non-human).

I am going to argue that art forms of machine music like Industrial and Electronic music can give new insights into our ecological problems, that are – first and foremost – a problem concerning our relationship with machines. To develop a better, more egalitarian and sustainable culture with them is at stake if we want to become more ecologically aware – and in this, the above mentioned art forms can help us to achieve that. To make this argument, I will try to characterize our time as entangled with and paralyzed by an unexpectedly high *resilience of modernism* and show how a deep rooted *machine fetishism* is strengthening this problem by making us act counter-productively without

being able to conceptually grasp the damage. After this theoretical framework, I will investigate how Industrial music can help us to emancipate from this problematic fetishism and will continue to move on to more contemporary, auditory⁶ art works, that can help us build a deeper relationship towards our machines.

RESILIENCE OF MODERNISM

We live in the period of the *post*-prefix. For several decades, we have and are still conceiving ourselves as post-modern, we live in post-colonial post-democracies, think about post-foundational politics and the problem of post-truth. Our philosophies are post-structuralist and post-human, in art there is talk about Post-Internet, post-conceptual and Post-Minimalism, our economic models are post-Fordian and our habitats post-industrial. Judging from our categories, we seem to know quite well, what we left behind – or at least, what we want to leave behind. However, there is no real understanding of where we actually are or want to go – and how we would want to name it. In a time of a global political and cultural backlash, we seem to fall back to the modernist categories we so desperately wanted to quit – and, quite horrified, realize that we are still modern. You can't pronounce post-modernism without saying modernism⁷ – and in lack of any feasible alternative, we stick to the same old devastating schemes. We are post-enlightened modernists: we know of all its ecological problems, but we can't find our way out of it. Frustrated by this, we turn our backs from any idealism that could make us believe in any positive change, affirm collapse and try to make our final days as shiny as can be. *Shine bright like a diamond. Everything that kills me makes me feel alive. Make America great again.*

Modernism seems to be very *resilient*. The term resilience can be described as “the ability of a system to absorb disturbances before unpredictably changing its structure from one equilibrium state to another”⁸. Modernism has been witnessing many disruptions, doubts and crises since WWI in the latest, but for now it has always been able to restabilize itself – our post-period is a symptom of this strong resilience: even after theoretically deconstructing it entirely, we are still entangled in it without any perspective towards a way out.

It appears to us ever more clearly that just running away from it by labeling us „post-x“ won't solve the problem: it much rather comes back in unpredictable ways, making us stunningly paralyzed by the return of what we believed we left behind long ago. It dawns unto us, that just declaring us post-x, without being able to define us without using x, does not suffice. Cynically, we shake our heads in bewilderment about „the stupidity of the common people“⁹, who will not change, inspite of all the deconstruction that has been going on. We resign to some hedonist escapism, be it in Berghain or in Thailand, and await the end of humanity.

For those of us who do not want to give in to this easy Christian image of the Apocalypse¹⁰, I propose to examine this resilience of modernism more closely¹¹. If mere denunciation and deconstruction do not suffice, we should still not give up hope. Much rather, we have to understand what makes our problem so resilient that it does not leave us that easily. We have to learn to acknowledge that we are all entangled with the problem, that we may love it, discover that we have – unacknowledged – always been in love with it. That it is our fetish, that we are obsessed by it and at the same time hate it. That we want it to hurt us and eventually swallow us.

MACHINE FETISHISM

For this purpose, I am proposing to examine the machine- or techno-fetishism of our age. According to Alf Hornborg, modernism is characterized by a fetishism for the machine¹², that hinders us from seeing their ecological impacts and entanglements. Modernists are, according to this theory, believers in the magical powers of the machines, that – since the European Renaissance – put their spell on us and promoted us to the technological Utopia of the now, in which everything is just a click away. According to this fetishist's history, it was the brilliant minds of male, white geniuses, direct descendants of Prometheus so to speak, who brought us the godly fire and made our lives on earth ever more heavenly. Based on epistemological dualisms like that of mind and body, culture and nature, male and female, modernism promoted a technological appropriation of the world that allegedly helped everybody to live a better, healthier and wealthier life.

What this story misses is that, as Alf Hornborg claims, technology is *per se* a product and the materialization of unequal distributions of material as well as social wealth. Since the Renaissance, global inequality did not diminish, but aggravate to a large scale, making today's inequality higher than ever in the Middle Ages¹³. That this, even today, appears like a surprise for most people, is because of the deep rooted machine fetishism in our modernist culture.

To illustrate this with example of the history of the steam engine: In our classical modernist understanding, it was the genius of James Watt, who – by the mere power of his cognitive abstraction – invented the steam engine, which is commonly considered to have triggered the a chain reaction of technological development and expansion that was later called the “Industrial Revolution”. This story, however, completely disregards the fact that the steam engine was already know in Ancient Greece as well as in – at least as some suggest – 14th century China.

What discerns those two milieus from 18th century Great Britain is not the absence of great minds, but their different economic and ecological situations, both of which did not make large-scale use of the steam engine economically profitable. “The British shift to steam power was a response to the world market demand for great volumes of inexpensive cotton cloth. Much of this

demand came from slave traders in West Africa and slave owners in America, and these very slaves supplied the British cotton textile industry with inexpensive raw material."¹⁴ The massive increase of machine use is due to the complex global ecological web of exploitation of people and resources that became dependent in direct or indirect ways to the euphemistically named *Commonwealth*. The Cartesian division, fueling scientific thought at the same period, seems to have been designed to hide exactly these exploitative structures and – up to today – understands technology as a result of abstraction and genius, prolonging the modernist tradition heavily based on such dualisms. "Although engineering knowledge is a necessary condition for technology, it is no a *sufficient* one. (...) The feasibility of the metabolic flows which sustain an organism is determined by its ecological context, whereas the feasibility of the metabolic flows which sustain a modern technology is determined by the world market."¹⁵ Without unequal distributions of wealth technology in its modern form could *ontologically* not exist.

The fetishised understanding of machines is one of the key factors for the strong *resilience of modernism*. Even within ecological movements, this Promethean romanticism of technology as a means of freeing humanity from material constraints is wide spread. Many believe that our ecological problems can be solved by massive investments in so called *Green Technology*. In doing so, they ignore the ecological embeddedness of technology, the fact that every machine – be it solar power or wind mills – is based on social as well as material inequalities and will contribute to a further extension of them. Culturally, we machine-fetishists are prone to ignore that many of our machines – be it the iPhone or the solar panel – can only exist because of massive global price differences in labor and distributions of resources like the more and more needed Rare Earths (it is no wonder, that both of these factors appear predominantly in China, the world's manufacturer of technological tools today). Industrial machines are based on modernist exploitation and dualisms and their use will only strengthen them.

This cultural trait is so dominant, that even one of the most prominent critics of the global modes of exploitation called capitalism, Karl Marx, was seduced by the same machine fetishism. Although he saw and massively criticized particularly the British inequalities that arose after the so called Industrial Revolution, he perceived technology "as innocent 'in itself'"¹⁶ and merely proposed a different way of organizing society, without tackling technology as embodiment of a particular social and economic situation as such. Classical Marxism was not able to overcome modernism, for it was as machine-fetishist as its capitalist opponent. As Gilbert Simondon would have it, the exploitation is not only a social problem, but a problem of our culture that does not have a proper understanding and place for technology¹⁷. Therefore the social problems that arose with modernism could neither have been solved by capitalism or communism, both have been – unknowingly – trapped in fetishist's blindnesses, that feeds the resilience of modernism. To overcome the current Status-Quo, we have to not only renounce the exploitation we see, but examine how the same exploitation is embedded in the relationship with our artifacts – how we are entangled with this exploitation, how our current social organization is based on it.

What Marx as well as most other critics missed, was "that the human reorganization of Nature tends to be a way of physically establishing social inequalities" and "that humans can stabilize their social relations by anchoring them to artifacts of various kinds"¹⁸ – in the modernist case: (industrial) machines. What distinguishes us from – for example – baboons – is that we build and stabilize or social relations into the artifacts we use.¹⁹ Modernist machines are therefore tools to stabilize the modernist world order of capitalism. If we believe we can solve the problems of modernism with same machines, we will always end up aggravating the situation despite of our best intentions. The fact that we do not immediately see the social injustices and ecological devastations machines cause "is made possible by displacing environmental impacts to other areas, populations, or social categories."²⁰

Although the wealthiest countries of the world (USA, Canada, greater Western Europe and Japan) are characterized by the most intense use of machines, the consequences of this use are shifted to the exploited areas, forming a central aspect of same exploitation. It is, therefore, no wonder that although – for example – India or China's *per capita* ecological footprint is much lower, you can see the devastations, the pollution and the dirt & downsides of industrialization much clearer than if you roam the streets of Amsterdam, Tokyo or Boston. The outsourcing of ecological catastrophe is part of the capitalist exploitation examined on a global level. This is visible today and will – with all likeliness – aggravate in the next decades, if we do not emancipate from our fetishist relationship with machines and see how they are a means of prolonging the Status-Quo. To overcome the strong resilience of modernism, we have to build a new, emancipated relationship with the artifacts that shape our world.

However, to emancipate from technology does not mean to get rid of it – as much as emancipation from your parents does not mean to kill them. Much rather, it entails a more coherent understanding of how we share and define our planet with machines. We will have to develop a culture that is more aware of them, that does neither fetishize nor hate the machines but understands their desires, needs and problems. For achieving this, the movement of Industrial music can be regarded as some kind of *Avant-garde*.

LOVING THE DESTRUCTION

"it's me

it's me

I see nothing

nothing that I can drink

I bite my tongue

and drink what I can

open up another door

Do not open

Do not open

*Do not open*²¹

"Hör mit Schmerzen" – *Listen with pain* or "Musik muss weh tun" – *music has to be painful* – are some of the slogans of Industrial Music. Bands like Throbbing Gristle, Nitzer Ebb or Einstürzende Neubauten around Blixa Bargeld (to which the two slogans above are attributed) started to work with sometimes painful, always noisy industrial machinery in the late 70ies and 80ies. They appropriated bulldozers, jackhammers and chainsaws as musical instruments to deliberately disturb and sometimes even hurt people. There is a musical sub genre called *Danger Music* that is defined as "based on the concept that some pieces of music can or will harm either the listener or the performer."²² *Einstürzende Neubauten* celebrated the tinnitus, *Merzbow* tried to find the most disturbing and painful noise, *Throbbing Gristle* idealized²³ and sometimes even performed self-mutilation with machinery, Yamantake Eye's band *Hanatarashi* once even drove a bulldozer into his audience. "Some of the band's most infamous shows included Eye cutting a dead cat in half with a machete, strapping a circular saw to his back and almost cutting his leg off, and destroying part of a venue with a backhoe bulldozer by driving it through the back wall and onto the stage"²⁴.

These kind of artistic endeavors tried at one level to reach new limits of provocation that went even further than Punk²⁵, but on an other, more subtle, and sometimes maybe even unconscious level they tried to research new aesthetics and even beauty in our heavily machine-dependent, industrial and post-industrial worlds²⁶. "Krach ist die moderne Melodie"²⁷ – *Noise is the modern melody*. The pain resulting from the machine noise, which we encounter frequently in our every day urban lives, when we pass construction yards, train stations or bigger streets, is encountered with an affirmation, seeking to find a more a coherent – neither rejective nor fetishised – stance towards modernist machinery.

"Everything is Muzak

Everybody is becoming the same

How late might it be?

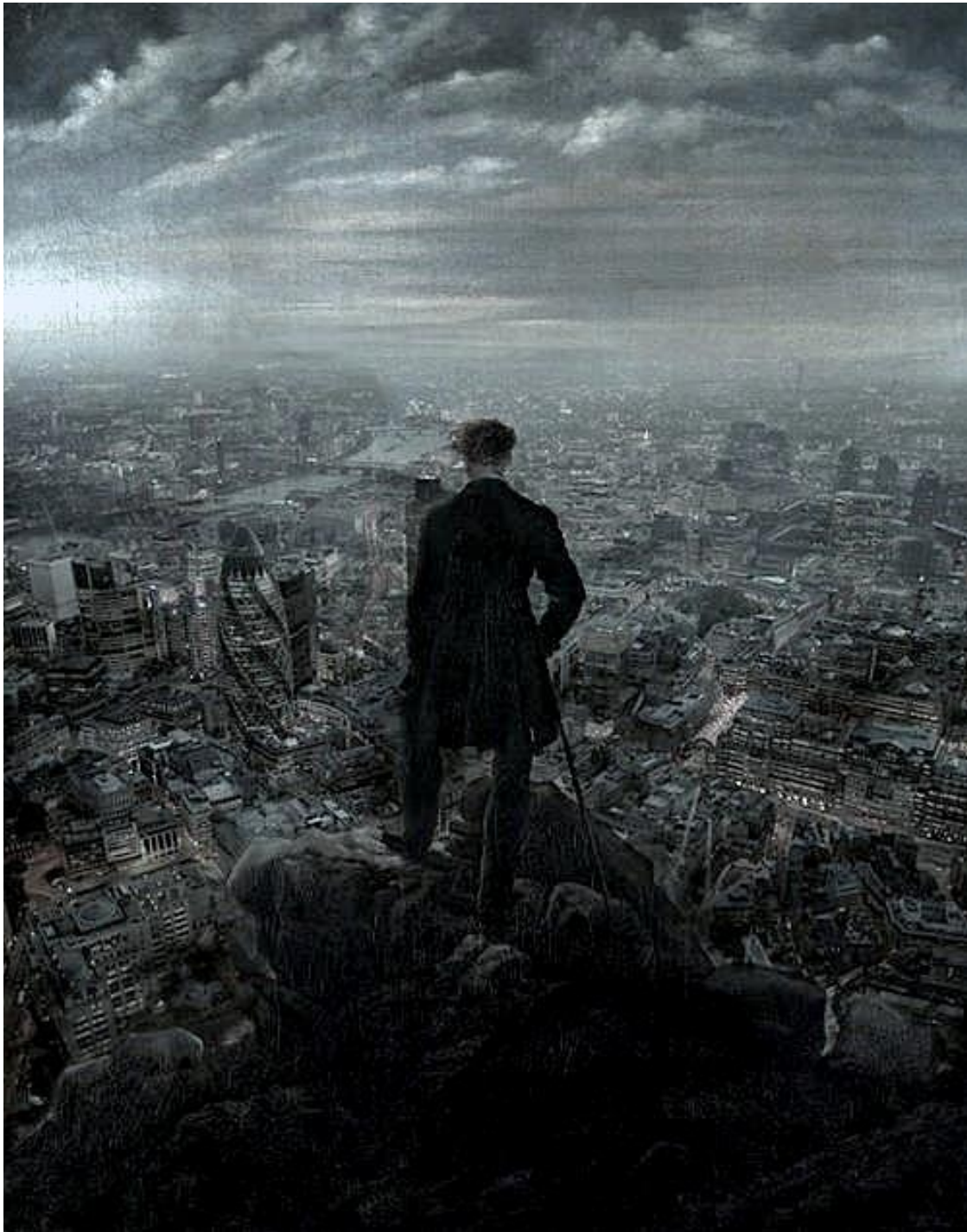
Power is a conveyor belt

and my ears are wounds

it is so shallow here."²⁸

To overcome machine fetishism, one will first have to look into the eye of what one so far called magic. One will no longer merely look into the smooth areas of our pseudo-Utopian surfaces, but will also incorporate the dirt, the devastation and noise of the machines that create them. This affirmation can help to develop a more coherent understanding of modernism, with all its up and downsides.

Of course, this is a dangerous attitude, for it involves incorporating and even identifying with all the dark sides of modernism, even fascism.²⁹ But to look away from these irreducible and important parts of our world will not make the machines stop their dirty work. It will only make the outcome less controllable. If ecological art contains only images of harmony, beauty and peaceful coexistence, it will continue to serve the same function as art in modernism: it will, like Caspar David Friedrich, help us to look away from the harsh realities, creating small escapist bubbles of surface-beauty that hide the global exploitation from the exploiters.



an internet meme putting C.D. Friedrich into a post-industrial setting

NEW BEAUTY

In turning our senses on the whole of our modernist world (rather than only the rare stretches of the fetishised beautiful, unspoiled or high-tech surfaces) one first encounters pain and horror, but after this first shock reaction, there is some beauty to be found in the rage of our machines. Rejecting modernist beauty does not mean to reject all beauty – it means to develop a new kind of beauty, one, that is more aware of the role of technology in our world.

After their first decade of violent noise music, *Einstüzende Neubauten's* records became more and more calm and even *harmonious* (probably in a non-modern sense of the word). They did not stop using machinery and painful noise, but they slowly found a way of including it into something that a growing amount of people were willing to regard as beautiful. From 1993's record *Tabula Rasa, Ende Neu* (1995) to *Silence is Sexy* (2000) and *Perpetuum mobile* (2004) there is a clear tendency towards

another kind of beauty, that is sung and speculated about in *Silence is Sexy*³⁰.

If we assume that the modernist machinery is getting ever more strong by our habit of ignoring or rejecting it, finding beauty in the beast³¹ is a first way of coping with it, of domesticating it and of emancipating from same machinery. In short: to find a way to live with modernism, benefiting from its advantages without unreflectedly destroying the ground on which we stand.

According to Gilbert Simondon, to develop an emancipated and just place for technology in our culture involves learning to see our machines as equal partners³². To overcome the alienation of machine fetishism (that results into a destructive ecological relationship) we have to learn that the idea of fully automated machines is a very primitive one. The independent (and lazy) human, surrounded by fully automated machines that do all his work, is a fetishized image that is unable to see the exploitation and destruction happening behind the pseudo-Utopian surface. As we have seen above, machines essentially require unequal flows of human as well as natural resources: if we do not do the work, it will be others who do it for us – even if this happens indirectly and on the other side of the world: in the Third World sweatshops producing our automated machines.



the studio of Sasu Ripatti

To emancipate from this primitive and ecologically hazardous image of the automated machine, we have to understand how our work can fit with the work of machines, finding an symbiotic relationship with them. A more advanced relationship is that with an "open machine, and the ensemble of open machines supposes the human as a permanent organizer, as a living interpreter of one machine in relation to another. Far from being the surveillant of a troupe of slaves, the human is a permanent organizer of a society of technical objects that need him like musicians need a conductor."³³

Most producers of electronic music³⁴ were exactly those conductors of an ensemble of machines piled up in masses in their studio rooms. Sasu Ripatti aka. Vladislav Delay, one of the most acclaimed electronic music producers of the last 20 years, describes his studio as an instrument as much as he sees the world as an instrument³⁵. His advice for producing good music is "learn from nature as much as you can"³⁶ and he is using all sorts of machines, tools and found objects to generate his sounds. Simondon's description of the conductor of technical objects could perfectly describe Ripatti's way of music making: "The conductor can direct his musicians only because, like them, and with a similar intensity, he can interpret the piece of music performed; he determines the tempo of their performance, but as he does so his interpretative decisions are affected by the actual performance of the musicians; in fact, it is through him that the members of the orchestra affect each other's interpretation; for each of them he is the real, inspiring form of the group's existence as group; he is the central focus of interpretation of all of them in relation to each other. This is how man functions as permanent inventor and coordinator of the machines around him. He is among the machines that work with him."

Listening to records like *The Four Quarters* from 2005 or *Visa* from 2014, we can hear how the machines are lead by the conductor to play and interact freely. Ripatti is not a master of machinic slaves, which serve his autocratic purpose to create some shallow and standardized Vocoder-beauty like most contemporary Pophits are. He assembles his machines in a way that every one has its own, individual role, held together by human composition. Every sound can break out as it wants to a certain degree: Ripatti's works are distinguished by an unpredictability that forms its particular kind of beauty. It is this beauty, that expresses the sound of an egalitarian understanding of our machinic partners, necessary for a more ecological way of living in our highly technological world. In works of Electronic music like those of Vladislav Delay, we can find an artistic vision³⁷ of what an ecological culture after the Anthropocene³⁸ could look like.

DIRTY SURFACES

But today, of course, we are still far away from this ecological way of living – our mainstream cultures are deeply caught in the resilience of modernism, producing ever more blunt surfaces of simulated, romantic beauty, covering up the dirt of our machine

fetishist world. *Shine bright like a diamond* in a constant loop, *Everything that kills me makes me feel alive*.

It is no wonder that Sasu Ripatti, a man who moved to the Finnish forests after 7 years of living in the heart of Berlin's music business, avoids digital modes of Electronic Music³⁹ production as much as possible. In his opinion, they are prone to produce and reproduce the same boring and shallow sounds, catered perfectly towards a neoliberal market logic, but having no real depth at all⁴⁰. It is the shiny, beautiful and smooth surfaces, that cover up the catastrophic problems of our world.

Artistic approaches like that of Vladislav Delay or Einstürzende Neubauten discover an alternative, *deeper* beauty, that can lead us the way to a more ecological society. However, to create glimpses⁴¹ of this alternative way is not the only musical way one can describe as ecological. Another approach is to hijack the surfaces and subversively affirm⁴² their beauty, so the ugliness and horror *inside* the beautiful becomes uncannily apparent. In this discipline, the hyped Internet-genre of Vaporwave developed a certain mastery over the last years. Like in the Industrial Music discussed above, they try to reveal the pain in modernism. This time, however, the pain is not below the fetishist surfaces, but *within* them. The source of pain is somewhat turned upside down: its no longer the loud, hard industrial machines that cause the pain and inspired artists from the 80ies.

Today, in our long de-industrialised, post-industrial societies artists like Daniel Lopatin, Holly Herndon or James Ferraro on the contrary follow the smooth surfaces of the cyberspace, where everything is colorful and <3 , XD , o.O – to use a more adequate, though already again a little outdated language.

Of course, the Internet is as well upheld and essentially dependent on loud, dirty machines like huge server cities, electricity plants, production sites and silicium and other Rare Earth mines. But they are somehow hidden, far away from our view – and even if we would be close to them, most of us would still look away, into the infinite smoothness of our portable devices. However: this is still (hyperhyper?)-modernism, there is still pain. This is what artists that can be ascribed to the Vaporwave genre are able to reveal: on and in the shallowness they explore the pain that arises from this exhaustingly sterile beauty, from the Kitsch of the surface itself, that is beautiful and at the same time too much and hurtful⁴³. They use cheap pop-melodies and cliché-Vocoder-voices all over, but contextualize them in such a way, that the effects are completely alienated and disturbing: suddenly, we realize the abyss behind the shallow beauty.

By doing so, they can make us aware of the real function of these surfaces: to cover-up. In a culture characterized by machine fetishism, it is *interventions* and *détournements* like these, that might contribute in waking us up from our modernist nightmare. That might free us from the hypnotization of our romantic surfaces covering up disaster and help us look at our real machinic world⁴⁴.

As I hope to have been able to show in the last pages, ecological art can be much more than what it is usually assumed to be. Particularly some of the musical developments in machine music of the last decades contain a lot of different potentials to bring us closer to a non-romantic version of an ecological society. To create beautiful "ecological" surfaces must not be the task of ecological art, but much rather to help gaining a deeper understanding of our situation, its causes and its possible way-outs.

1 Ecological Art and Ethics – Adriana Bianco (1997) INTERVIEW with Nohra Corredor <http://www.ecologicalart.org/ec.html>

2 Compare for example: Michael Hampe, *Tunguska, or the End of Nature: A Philosophical Dialogue*, 2015.

3 Timothy Morton, *Dark Ecology: For a Logic of Future Coexistence.*, 2016, <https://doi.org/10.7312/mort17752>.

4 Josef H Reichholf, *Stabile Ungleichgewichte: die Ökologie der Zukunft* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2009).

5 Compare my article "Be part of the problem, not the solution" at Entkunstung Jorunal: <http://entkunstung.com/be-part-of-the-problem>

6 In this I follow what my dear friend Lona Gaikis proposes to call an auditory turn in the arts, suggesting that there is a contemporary significant shift from the visual sense to the auditory sense as the main medium in the arts.

7For a good analysis of post-modernism see Bruno Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2002).

8Alf Hornborg, *Global Ecology and Unequal Exchange: Fetishism in a Zero-Sum World* (Abingdon, Oxon; New York, NY: Routledge, 2011).

9This dangerous attitude is not only deep routed within conservative elites, but as well among the left. Compare the enlightening article "Enemies of the People" by Angela Nagele: <https://thebaffler.com/outbursts/enemies-people-nagle>

10On an analysis of the role of the apocalypse in our discourses compare the chapter " Merry Crisis and a Happy New Fear" in the book "To our Friends" by the Invisible Comitee.

11I am in preparation of a book in which I'll try to give a bit more thorough analysis of the resilience of modernism.

12The following is a recapitulation of Alf Hornborg's concept of machine fetishism. Compare: Hornborg, *Global Ecology and Unequal Exchange*; Alf

Hornborg, *Global Magic: Technologies of Appropriation from Ancient Rome to Wall Street*, 2016.

13 Pommeranz The Grerat Divergence

14 S. 17 of Alf Hornborg: *Global magic: technologies of appropriation from ancient Rome to Wall Street* 2016.

15 S. 4 of Alf Hornborg: *Machines as Manifestations of World-Systems: Implications for a Global Ontology of Technology*. Sent to my by the author and to be published soon in *Anthropological Theory*.

16 S. 7 ibd.

17Simondon S. 165

18 S. 5 & 10 ibd.

19 S. S. Strum and Bruno Latour, "Redefining the social link: from baboons to humans," *Social Science Information* 26, no. 4 (1987): 783–802. via ibd.

20 S. 15 aus Alf Hornborg: *Global ecology and unequal exchange: fetishism in a zero-sum world*, Abingdon, Oxon; New York, NY 2011.

21 Blixa Bargeld, *Stimme frißt Feuer* (Berlin: Merve, 1988). German Original: "ich bin's – ich sehe nichts – nichts was ich trinken kann – ich beiß mir in die Zunge – und trinke was ich kann – öffne eine andere Tür – Mach nicht auf – Mach nicht auf – Mach nicht auf" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XFHnnhDo77U>

22 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Danger_music (10.4.2017)

23 Compare the Lyrics of their track "A Debris of Murder"

24 <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hanatarash> (10.4.17) Photos of the show can be found here: <http://www5a.biglobe.ne.jp/~gin/rock/japan/hanatarasi/hanatarashi2/hanatarashi2.html> (10.4.2017)

25 As Genesis P. Orridge, founding member of Throbbing Gristle, once said in an interview.

26 For a speculation on the connection between the emergence of Techno music and the disappearance of heavy industrial machinery from the Western world, see the text: *Maschine-Werden* by Jorinde Schulz and myself, published in *Enegagée #3 – Begehren*. Wien, Berlin, Utrecht: 2016. http://www.engagee.org/assets/-3-maschine_j%C3%B6rg_schulz.pdf

27 Bargeld, *Stimme frißt Feuer*.

28 Translated excerpt from "Die genaue Zeit" in Bargeld S.99. German Original: "Alles wird Muzak – Alle werden gleich – Wie spät mag es sein? – Die Macht ist ein laufendes Band – und meine Ohren sind Wunden – Es ist so flach hier"

29It is Adorno/Horkheimer's central claim, that modernism necessarily produced fascism as a byproduct. To delve into the hidden realms of modernity thereby naturally involves a confrontation and sometimes even identification with fascism, as bands like Nitzer Ebb, Rammstein or Laibach demonstrate.

30Compare the Song "Beauty" on this record.

31In the earlier record "½ Mensch" from 1985 the band sings already about "a last beast in the heavens" – compare the song "Das letzte Biest am Himmel"

32p. 166 ff of Gilbert Simondon et al., *Du mode d'existence des objets techniques* (Paris: Aubier, 2012).

33p. 12 of Gilbert Simondon et al., *Du mode d'existence des objets techniques* (Paris: Aubier, 2012). – my translation

34This chapter is on electronic music production before the commercialization of digital music production with Ableton Live, which will be mentioned in the next chapter.

35In an interview with the magazine *Future Music*, Issue 285

36<http://secretthirteen.org/secret-thirteen-interview-vladislav-delay/>

37Our ocularcentric language is limited in this regard, for it is much rather – and not by chance – an *audion*, than a vision, if this word would exist.

38Following Donna Haraway, I consider the Anthropocene not as a geological epoch, but as a transition phase we should leave behind as fast as possible. Compare Haraway, Donna: *Staying with the trouble*.

39Ricardo Villalobos shares the criticism on Ableton Live: <https://www.residentadvisor.net/features/1128>

40<http://www.electronicbeats.net/the-waiting-game-an-interview-with-vladislav-delay/> (ironically presented by Deutsche Telekom) – we do not necessary share his pessimism, for also this technology can be learned and appropriated, we hope

41 Again a misleading oculacentric world

42 Laibach did the same with fascist aesthetics

43For the auditive experience of this weird mixture of pain and kitsch, which has an interesting, up-side-down resemblance of Industrial music, compare for example the two subsequent tracks “Still Life” and “Chrome Country” of Daniel Lopatin’s Oneohtrix Point Never’s 2015 Record *R Plus Seven*, Holly Herndon’s “Home” on 2015’s *Platform* or Burial’s track “Come down to us” on the EP *Rival Dealer* of 2013.

44In “Maschine-Werden” *Becoming Machine* (Translation in preparation) Jorinde Schulz and I propose to regard techno clubs as temples devoted to building new relationships to machines.

Kilian Jörgs Blog hier

Foto: Bernhard Weber

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